

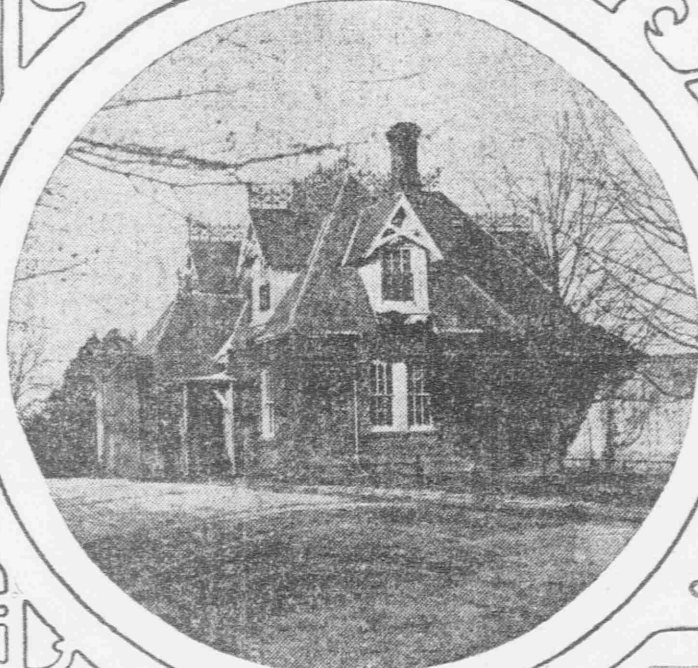
WHERE THE GOVERNMENT CARES FOR UNFORTUNATES

THE National Hospital for the Insane, Beautifully Situated on Wooded Heights Overlooking the Capital, One of the Most Complete and Progressive Institutions of Its Kind in the World. First Opened for the Reception of Patients in October, 1855.

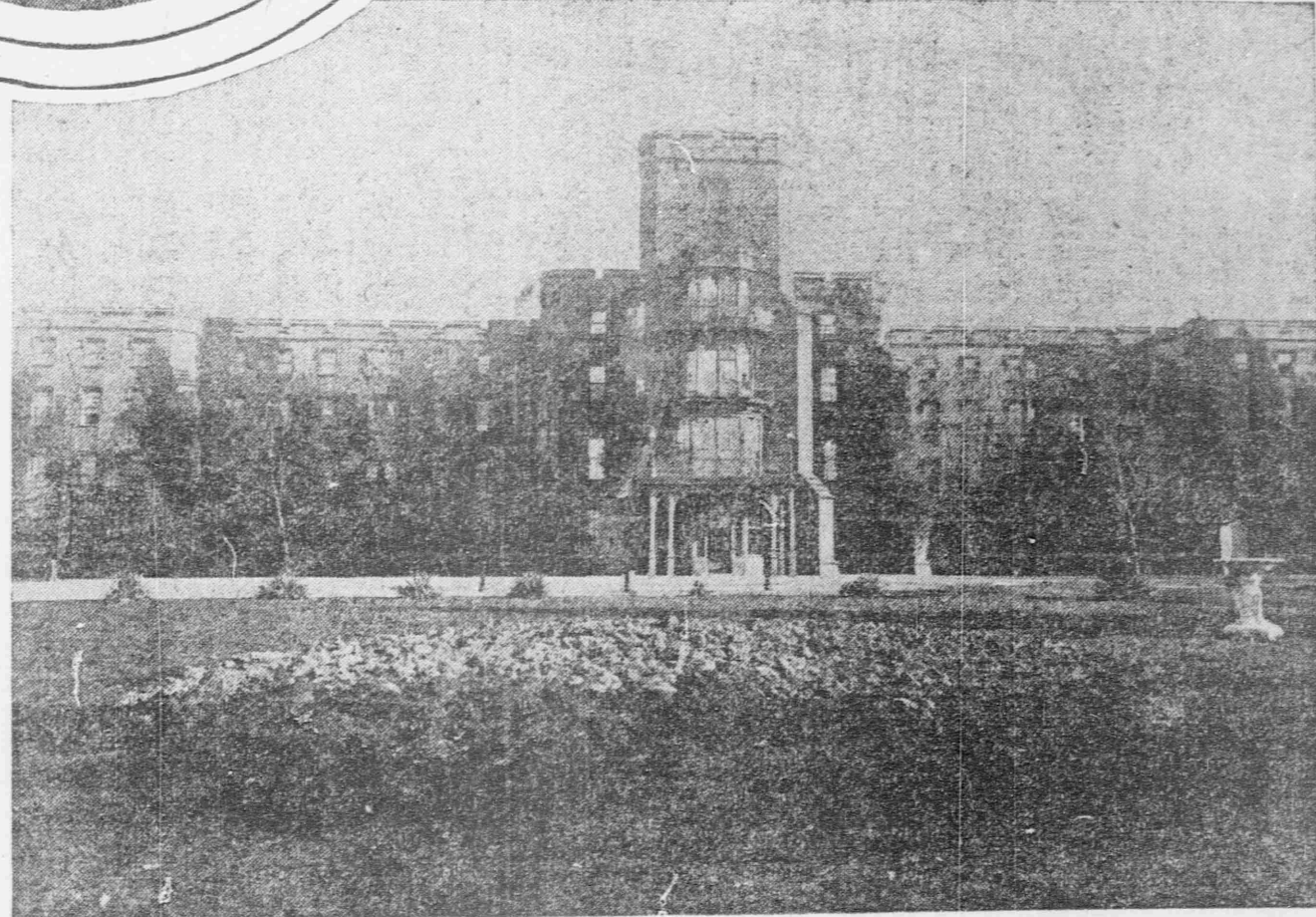
KNOWN as St. Elizabeth, a Name Bestowed Upon the Elevated Site by the Jesuits Who Accompanied Calvert Up the Potomac River—First Appropriation by Congress for an Asylum Only \$3,000, and Was Made in 1841—The Work of Dorothea Lynde Dix.



Patients Enjoying an Outing.



The Lodge at the Main Gateway.



Administration Hall.

WITHIN the District of Columbia, and looking down from its wooded heights and trimly-kept walks and gardens on the city of Washington and the Potomac, stands the institution known familiarly as St. Elizabeth, and officially as the Government Hospital for the Insane. As a Government institution it stands foremost in the ranks of hospitals of its class in the United States. If indeed, it is not the most complete and progressive in the world. The magnitude of its scope and the importance of the work there carried on may be judged when it is considered that its patients are drawn not alone from the District of Columbia, but include the insane of the Army and Navy, Marine Corps, Revenue Cutter Service, and the National Homes for Disabled Volunteers.

One-Third District Patients.

Of the patients undergoing treatment, about one-third are accredited to the District, which is frequently burdened with the care of various "cranks" from all parts of the country, who flock to the seat of the national Administration with much the same persistency that moths fly to a candle-flame, and not only these must be looked after, but the District must care for deranged inventors, and office-seekers, and pensioners crazed by disappointment. The ratio is one patient to every 203 bona fide residents of the District. The annual expense is divided between the United States and the District of Columbia, but the latter does not contribute to the care of the buildings and grounds, nor does it provide any of the new buildings or equipments.

Began Sixty Years Ago.

The partnership between the United States and the District of Columbia in the treatment of the insane began sixty years ago. At that time the unfortunates were placed in the old jail in Judiciary Square, the corporation of Washington paying \$2 a week for each person.

The first appropriation by Congress for the purpose of an asylum—\$3,000—was made February 2, 1841, but not till eleven years later did the project assume adequate shape and proportion. At that period the fragile, intrepid Dorothea Lynde Dix was at the height of her noble endeavors in behalf of the mentally diseased. Already twelve State Legislatures, swayed by her eloquence, had provided asylums for the insane of their respective populations, when her efforts to establish a similar institution in the District of Columbia were

crowned with success. Her bill for an appropriation of \$100,000 for this purpose became a law August 31, 1852. Of this sum, \$25,000 was to be expended for a suitable site.

Dr. Charles H. Nichols, superintendent of Bloomingdale Asylum, New York, acting for Miss Dix, had selected an estate belonging to Thomas Blagden, at the junction of the Potomac River and its Eastern Branch. Commanding a superb view of land and water, gently sloping on all sides, thus insuring perfect drainage, and uniting the varied charms of woodland and pasture, it presented every conceivable advantage.

Named by Jesuits.

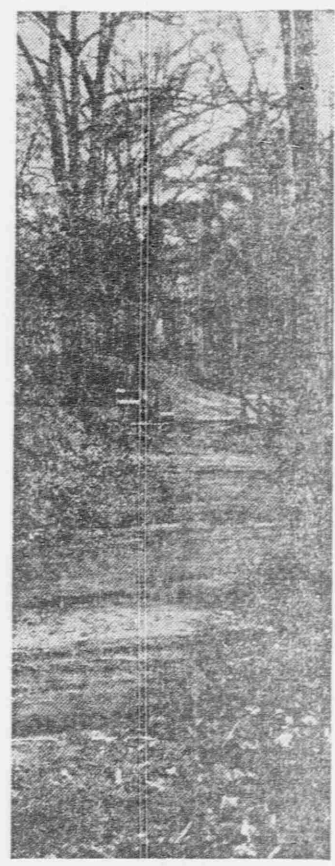
The Jesuit priests who accompanied the Calverts to the new world named the beautiful and elevated spots along the Potomac in honor of their favorite saints. When nearing the site of the yet unborn Capital of the United States, these missionaries, in a spirit of prophecy, called this splendid tract—later the home of the Blagdens—after the devout Hungarian princess who made lepers, paupers, and the insane her special care. As generations passed away the land changed owners several times, but the name remained, and then as now was known as "St. Elizabeth."

Mr. Blagden's estate was most dear to him and his family, and the amount appropriated was \$15,000 beneath its value. Dr. Nichols, having failed in his efforts to induce Mr. Blagden to sell his estate, sought Miss Dix in the little alcove which, by courtesy of Congress, had been set apart for her in the Congressional Library. "There is nothing to be done!" he exclaimed. "We shall have to give the matter up; and it is the finest site for a hospital in the world."

Dorothea Dix's Efforts.

Miss Dix sought Mr. Blagden, and her appeal to him to surrender what was dear to one household for the benefit of thousands of his suffering fellow-creatures proved irresistible. His letter to her, written a few hours after this interview, has been called a "beautiful tribute to consecrated womanhood," and though he wept and wrung his hands when called upon to sign the papers, he manfully held to his promise.

The hospital entered upon its work in October, 1855, with 83 white and 12 colored patients. Its first superintendent, Dr. Nichols, was only thirty-two years of age when he assumed charge. He remained until 1877, when he returned to Bloomingdale. His successor, Dr. Godding, had made for him-



A Woodland Path, and Rustic Bridge.

self a notable record at the asylum in Taunton, Mass. Dr. Godding died in May, 1899, and a few months later, Dr. A. B. Richardson, superintendent of the State Hospital for Insane at Columbus, Ohio—a distinguished alienist, and a personal friend of President McKinley—was appointed superintendent.

A Beautiful Reservation.

The enclosure, which is said to be the most beautiful Government reservation in the District of Columbia, is 185 acres in extent. Its lawns, groves, walks, and fountains are a revelation in landscape gardening, and a perpetual joy to the inmates, who are permitted to spend much time in the open air, and for whom outdoor diversions have been generously provided.

Viewed from the river, the administration building and its surrounding structures formerly resembled an old-world estate. At present, with the numerous annexes, and many others in course of erection, it presents the appearance of a thriving village.

The administration building was designed by Thomas U. Walter, then architect of the Capitol from plans made by Dr. Nichols. It is of red brick, in the Gothic style of architecture. It consists of an imposing central hall, four stories in height, with connecting ranges, and receding wings, having bold buttresses, iron windowhoods, and an embattled parapet. It is 750 feet in length, with a central depth of 250 feet, and contains 550 apartments. In the wings are quartered the better class of patients of both sexes. The central building contains the residence of the superintendent, the offices, parlors, dis-

pensary, chapel, library, and billiard-rooms.

Neatness and Quietness.

Immaculate neatness and absolute quiet are the distinguishing characteristics of this part of the institution. The offices, despite the vast amount of business transacted in them, never display the slightest evidence of confusion or complication, though from them go forth the orders on which depend the well-being of more than 2,800 persons. In the upper stories the wards are designated by the names of "Sycamore," "Poplar," and other varieties of trees. The patients are permitted the great-

est possible degree of liberty, and individual tastes are given full sway. A surprising number display an appreciation of good literature, though incapable of reading for more than brief periods. Many of the women in these wards are musically inclined, and have at their disposal an excellent piano. There are several who draw and paint with commendable results.

The superintendent has five assistant internes, two pathologists, and a dentist. They are assisted by 611 employees, representing almost every trade and craft that human ingenuity has devised. The

appropriation for current expenses for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1902, was \$495,000, making provision for an average number of 2,300 patients. General repairs and necessary improvements estimated at \$25,000, and the continuation of the work of extension authorized by act of Congress of June 6, 1900, aggregate the additional sum of \$332,500.

Laundry and Kitchen.

The chief amount of work now performed by patients, especially in the laundry and kitchen, is by colored women. In the laundry fifty persons are required to handle the 45,000 pieces which pass through it every week.

Among the ideas developed by Dr. Richardson is a training school for nurses. The second graduating class, composed of thirty employees, recently completed a two years' course. The experiment has been a noteworthy success, and its scope will be extended. Another innovation is a volunteer fire department, made up of employees, under the direction of one of the assistant physicians who has had experience in commanding fire drills.

Many Cures Effectuated.

The care and attention given to the business management of the hospital is not its only feature. For it continues to lead the world in the number of cures it has effected. For many years it maintained an average of 20 per cent of patients cured, and this ratio is increasing. Of the 13,267 cases treated from its inception until June 30, 1902, 4,304 have been dismissed as cured, and 2,976 enrolled in the class known as "improved."

Many Soldiers and Sailors.

According to the latest official report, the hospital has 2,316 patients, of whom about 24 per cent are women. There are soldiers and sailors of all ranks, from those who have rendered conspicuous service on sea and land, to the private from the humblest walk of life, and the jack tar who once polished the guns and decks of our battleships. Of the officers whose minds have become disordered under the stress of severe and monotonous duty, the number is pathetically large. Not a few were deprived of reason as a result of wounds received in battle, or gallant conduct in catastrophe. They are all permitted to ride their hobbies, or pursue their favorite pastimes at will.

Recently eight Indian patients were removed from St. Elizabeth to a new institution for the insane of their race, in Canton, S. D.

Returning From Dinner.

